

CDC Becomes Sole National Reference Center For Bacteriophage Typing of Staphylococci

Joint Statement of Policy by the Laboratory Branch, Communicable Disease Center, and the Committee on Bacteriophage Typing, American Public Health Association.

The Communicable Disease Center of the Public Health Service has become the sole National Reference Center for Bacteriophage Typing of Staphylococci in the United States. In accepting this assignment, the Center has assumed responsibility for reference center activities formerly directed by Dr. John E. Blair. The Center has provided bacteriophages for typing *Staphylococcus aureus* to various State and Federal laboratories for several years. In addition, the Center now provides starter sets of phages to investigators in hospitals and research institutions. Investigators are expected to propagate their own phages from those obtained from CDC, since phages cannot be supplied continuously. When satisfactory phages and propagating strains become commercially available, the Center will supply these materials for reference purposes only.

The following phages and propagating strains, which constitute the international basic set of phages, may be obtained from CDC: 29, 52, 52A, 79, 80, 3A, 3B, 3C, 55, 71, 6, 7, 42E, 47, 53, 54, 75, 77, 83A, 42D, 187, and 81. Undiluted phages will be supplied in 3 ml. amounts and will have routine test dilutions of at least 10^{-3} . It will be necessary to titrate each phage soon after it is received, since routine test dilutions will not be given on individual vials.

It is recommended that investigators unfamiliar with the procedures for standardizing and using phages become well acquainted with the article, "Phage Typing of Staphylococci" by John E. Blair and R. E. O. Williams (*Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 24:771-784, 1961).

Reprints are available from the Staphylococcus and Streptococcus Unit, Communicable Disease Center. Investigators who intend to propagate phages from the starter sets are urged to visit the Center for a few days to learn the standard techniques. Persons desiring to compare their results with those obtained by using standard phages, particularly when publication is intended, may send a few cultures with representative phage patterns to the CDC National Reference Center for typing.

Requests for staphylococcus phages and propagating strains should be made through the director of laboratories of the respective State or territorial health department, who should process the requests according to the general instructions in the CDC Biological Reagents Catalog. Such requests should contain a brief description of the project on which the reagents will be used. If the project is being supported by funds from the National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, the materials may be requested directly from CDC. These requests must cite the project title and grant number. All other correspondence regarding such matters as the phages and propagating strains, visits to the Center, and submission of cultures for phage typing should be addressed to Dr. P. B. Smith, assistant chief, Staphylococcus and Streptococcus Unit, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Ga., 30333.